Nuclear power projects

1211. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to start two nuclear power projects in Gujarat and Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have plans to start similar projects in Bihar and Maharashtra; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has accorded 'in principle' approval for settingup of 2x700 MWe indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) each at Rawatbhata in Rajasthan and Kakrapar in Gujarat during the Eleventh Plan.

(c) and (d) Government has also accorded in principle approval for development of Jaitapur site in Maharashtra for setting up of a nuclear power plant. No decision has been taken with respect to Nuclear Power Plant in Bihar.

Mining of titanium in Kerala

1212. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is large deposit of titanium in the coastal Kerala fit for commercial exploitation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a U.S. aircraft manufacturer had evinced interest in mining the titanium ore for making alloys used in the manufacture of aircrafts, which the State Government did not approve;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Russia has proposed to take up exploitation of titanium in Kerala; and

(f) if so, the Centre's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Many deposits of titanium have been identified along the coastal stretches of Kerala The important ones are at Chavara and its extension areas, Kayamkulam-Arattupuzha-Thrikkunnapuzha-Thottapally areas. .The total titanium resources of Kerala (Ilmenite, Leucoxene and Rutile) is estimated as 114.28 million tonnes.

(c) and (d) Boeing Corporation, a U.S. aircraftmanufacturer has expressed interest in entering into long term purchase arrangements for titanium from India.

However, they are not interested in mining or processing titanium, but would like to assure purchase and encourage technology tie ups if we can set up a joint venture for mining and processing titanium in India.

(e) and (f) Yes Sir, a MoU was signed between the Government of Kerala and Rosoboronexport of Russia (a Federal State Unitary Enterprise) in May, 2007 to make use of Ilmenite resources in Kerala to manufacture titanium sponge and other value added products. A Joint Working Group has been formed to prepare a techno-economic feasibility report.

Creation of a SPV

1213. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI MAHMOOD A. MADANI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that select PSUs are creating a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to acquire coal mines abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for such a step; and

(d) the countries which have been identified for such acquisitions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) to (c) A proposal initiated by Ministry of Steel for creating Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) comprising of Steel Authority of India Limited, Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited, Coal India Limited, National Thermal Power Corporation Limited and National Mineral Development Corporation Limited is under consideration of Government. The main objective is to ensure supply of imported metallurgical coal to meet the requirements of public sector steel plants who have undertaken massive expansion programmes.

(d) No country has been identified for acquisition of coal mines abroad by the SPV.

Non-utilisation of coal blocks

1214. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Parliamentary Committee has criticized the Ministry of Coal for failing to ensure development of captive coal blocks allotted as back as 1998;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the lackadaisical approach of his Ministry in monitoring the progress of captive coal blocks allotted to different parties has resulted in non-utilization coal blocks for exploration of coal; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to develop the coal blocks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) Standing Committee on Coal and Steel on Demand for Grants